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HENRIETTA SONTAG.

(Translated for this Journal, from the French of P. Scuno.)

HENRIETTA SONTAG was born at Coblenz on the 13th of May, 1805, of one of those families of nomadic actors, of which Goethe has given us the poetical history in his *Wilhelm Meister*. Born, like the haleyon, on the stormy waves, she early knew the vicissitudes and trials of an artist life. When only six years old, she made her *début* at Darmstadt, in an opera very popular in Germany, the "Daughter of the Danube," where, in the part of Salome she was admired for the infantile graces of her person, and the correctness of her voice. Three years later, having lost her father, Henrietta, with her mother, went to Prague, where she played children's parts under the direction of Weber, then at the head of the theatre orchestra. Her precocious success obtained for her, by most especial favor, permission to follow the courses of the Conservatoire in that city, although she had not yet reached the age required by the rules. There, for four years, she studied vocal music, the piano and the elements of vocalization. The indisposition of the prima donna of the theatre gave her an opportunity, for the first time, to undertake a rather important rôle, that of the princess of Navarre in Boieldieu's "John of Paris." She was then fifteen. The facility of her voice, her budding beauty, the trouble which made her heart full of mysterious presentiments, achieved her a success, which augured well for the future of her talent.

From Prague, Henrietta Sontag went to Vi-

enna, where she met Mme. Mainvielle-Fodor, whose example and good counsels developed the happy tendencies she had received from nature. Singing alternately in German and Italian opera, she could try her powers in both of these so different languages, and give herself time to choose between the glittering caprices of the Italian music and the sober and profound accents of the new German school. Being offered an engagement at the German Opera in Leipsic, in 1824, she went to that focus of philosophical and literary discussions, and there acquired a great fame by the manner in which she interpreted the *Frey-schütz* and *Euryanthe* of Weber.

The admirers of this great musician's genius were composed of the youth of the universities and of all the ardent and generous souls who wished to redeem Germany from foreign dominion, as well in the realm of the imagination as in that of politics; they shouted with enthusiasm the name of Fraulein SONTAG, which spread through all Germany as that of a *virtuoso* of the first order, called to renew the marvellous things of Mara. It was at Leipsic that Mara, that famous German singer of the end of the 18th century, had been educated under the care of old professor Hiller. They felt obliged to Mlle. Sontag for consecrating a magnificent organ and a vocalization, far from common that side of the Rhine, to the rendering of the strong and deep music of Weber, of Beethoven, of Spohr and of all the new German composers who had broken *all truce with foreign impiety*, and given full scope to the genius of their country. Surrounded with homage, celebrated by all the *beaux esprits*, sung by the students and escorted by the *huzzas* of the German press, Mlle. Sontag was called to Berlin, where she made her *début* with immense success at the theatre of Koenigstadt. It was at Berlin, it will be remembered, that *Der Freyschütz* was represented for the first time, in 1821. It was at Berlin, that Protestant, rationalist city, the centre of an intellectual and political movement which sought to absorb the activity of Germany at the expense of Vienna, the Catholic city, where reigned the spirit of tradition, the sensuality, the breeze and the facile melodies of Italy; it was at Berlin, we say, that the new school of dramatic music, founded by Weber, had found its fulcrum. Mlle. Sontag was enthusiastically received there, as an inspired interpreter of the national music. The Hegelian philosophers made her the subject of their learned commentaries, and in her limpid

and sonorous voice they hailed the *blending of the subjective with the objective in an absolute unity!* The old king of Prussia received her at the court with a paternal kindness. There it was, that diplomacy found occasion to approach Mlle. Sontag and to lay siege to the heart of the Muse.

Availing herself of leave of absence, Mlle. Sontag came at length to Paris and made her *début* at the Italian theatre, on the 15th of June, 1826, in the rôle of Rosina, in the "Barber of Seville." Her success was brilliant, especially in Rode's variations, which she introduced in the second act during the singing lesson. [An example followed by Mme. de la Grange of late in London.—Tr.] This success was confirmed and even increased in the *Donna del Lago* and the *Italiana in Algieri*, in which she had to transpose several passages written for a contralto. On her return to Berlin she was received with redoubled interest. In that city she remained till the end of the year 1826; then, abandoning Germany and the school which had brought her up in the depths of its sanctuary, she came to fix her abode in Paris. She began with the rôle of Desdemona in *Otello*, on the 2d January, 1828. She made one of that constellation of admirable artists, who at that time charmed Paris and London, and among whom Pasta, Pisaroni, Malibran and Sontag shone as stars of the first magnitude.

Between these two last *cantatrici*, differing so greatly in their kinds of merit, one of those fruitful rivalries declared itself, of which Hoffman has given us such a dramatic picture. This rivalry was pushed so far between the imperious Juno and the blonde Venus, that they could not meet in the same saloon. On the stage, when they sang in the same opera, whether it were *Don Juan* or *Semiramide*, their heroic jealousy revealed itself in killing *cadenzas* and vocal Congreve rockets which set the audience on fire. Now the Trojans, and now the Greeks carried it. The parterre rose and subsided like the waves of the sea under the Olympic deities. Finally, one day, Mme. Malibran and Mlle. Sontag having to sing a duet in a princely house, the blending of these two voices, so different in *timbre* and in character of expression, produced such an effect, that the success of the two great singers brought about their reconciliation. From that time a calm reigned *sul mare infido*.

But in the midst of these successes and these festivals of Art, a black speck rose on the horizon;

diplomacy was secretly at work; its protocols grew threatening and it was suddenly learned that Mlle. Sontag was about to quit the theatre for duties more austere. A year since she had formed a private union with count Rossi, who was not disposed to share his happiness. She bade adieu to the Parisian public in a performance for the benefit of the poor, which took place at the Opera in January, 1830. Returning to Berlin, at the instance of her friends and numerous admirers, she consented to give a few more representations, and then quitted the stage definitively two months before the revolution of July. But, before accepting the new rôle which she had chosen for life, before despoiling herself of the brilliant fame which she had so justly acquired, Mlle. Sontag made a tour to Russia, giving concerts, as brilliant as they were remunerative, at Warsaw, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and then at Hamburg and other important cities of Germany.

It was after this tour that, under the name of Madame the Countess of Rossi, following the fortunes of her husband, she passed several years in succession at Brussels, at the Haye, at Frankfort and at Berlin, letting her voice be heard only in the reunions of that high European society, which the revolution of February shook to its foundations.

Mlle. Sontag possessed a soprano voice of very great extent, of great equality of *timbre*, and of marvellous flexibility. In the upper octave, from the medium C to C above the staff, that voice rang deliciously like a silver bell, and you had never to fear a doubtful intonation, or a want of equilibrium in its prodigious exercises. This rare flexibility of organ was the result of the munificence of nature, fructified by incessant and well-directed labors. Until her arrival at Vienna, where she had occasion to hear the great virtuosos of Italy, she had been guided only by her happy instinct and by the more or less enlightened taste of her public. It was to the counsels of Mme. Mainvielle-Fodor, and still more to the example which the exquisite talent of that admirable singer daily offered her, that Mlle. Sontag owed the expansion of those native qualities, which, until then, had remained as it were shut up in the bud. The competition with rivals like Mmes. Pisaroni and Malibran, those heroic combats which she had to sustain on the theatres of Vienna, Paris and London, perfected her talent to that degree of savory maturity, which has made Mlle. Sontag one of the most brilliant singers of Europe.

In the magnificent casket of vocal gems which Mlle. Sontag displayed every night before her admirers, we especially remarked the limpidity of her chromatic gamuts and the brilliancy of her trills, which sparkled like rubies on a velvet ground. Each note of those long descending spirals stood out as if it had been struck isolatedly and attached itself to the following note by an imperceptible and delicate solder; and all these marvels were accomplished with a perfect grace, never disfiguring her countenance by the slightest sign of effort. Her charming figure, her fine limpid and soft eyes, her elegant form and her stature, springing and supple as the stem of a young poplar, finished the picture and completed the enchantment.

Mlle. Sontag tried her power in every kind. Born in Germany at the commencement of this

stormy century, she was nourished on the vigorous and powerful music of the new German school, and obtained her first successes in the masterpieces of Weber. At Paris, she undertook successively the parts of Desdemona, of Semiramis, and of Donna Anna in Mozart's *chef-d'œuvre*. In spite of the enthusiasm, which she seems to have excited in her countrymen by her manner of rendering the dramatic inspiration of Weber, (an enthusiasm, of which we find the echo in the works of Louis Boerne); in spite of the brilliant qualities she has displayed in the part of Desdemona, and above all in that of Donna Anna, which was almost imposed upon her by the jealousy of Malibran, it is in the light music and in the temperate style that Mlle. Sontag found her true superiority. Her Rosina in the "Barber," her Ninette in *La Gazza Ladra*, her Amenaide in *Tancredi*, and her Elena in the *Donna del Lago*, have been her finest triumphs.

The cry of pathos could not escape from those fine lips, where shone the voluptuous *morbidità* and the half smile of grace; the explosion of sentiment never came to alter the pure lines of her face, nor to tinge with purple that skin, white and smooth as satin. No, in that elegant body, which fled before the eager gaze like a light vapor, nature had not deposited creative germs. The electric spark, in traversing that placid heart, never lit up there the divine fire and never engendered the magnificent tempests of passion. Behold why Mlle. Sontag consented to bow her charming head under the hymeneal yoke and to descend from a throne, to which she had been raised by the omnipotence of talent, to become the countess of Rossi. Who knows but that bitter regrets have since come to trouble the repose which she promised herself? Who knows but that Madame, the Ambassador's wife, in the midst of the glooms of greatness, has cast a melancholy look upon the beautiful years of her youth, when a whole nation of admirers crowned her with roses and immortals? Have not M. Auber and M. Scribe, in their pretty opera, *l'Amassadrice*, told us the story of Mlle. Sontag becoming the countess of Rossi?

The voice of Mme. Sontag is well preserved. If the lower chords have lost their fulness and grown dull a little under the hand of time, as it always happens with soprano voices, the upper notes are still full of roundness and of charm. Her talent is almost as exquisite as it was twenty years ago; her vocalization has lost nothing of the marvellous flexibility that characterized it then; and without much effort of imagination one finds again to-day, in Mme. Sontag, the finish, the charm, the tempered and serene expression, which distinguished her among the eminent *cantatrici*, who have been the marvel of Europe for the last half century. Welcomed with distinction by a select public, which assembled at the report of her glory and of her misfortune, Mme. Sontag has sung several pieces of her old *répertoire* with great success.

Among these pieces, we may especially remark the variations of Rode, a sort of melodic canvass brought into fashion by Mme. Catalani, and upon which Sontag has embroidered the most ingenious and most adorable arabesques. An ascending scale, shot on the wing and passing before the bewildered ear like a ribbon of fire, has excited the liveliest transports.

In her second, third and fourth concerts, the

success of Mme. Sontag was still more decisive. Let us add, moreover, that time, which seems to have passed lightly over this charming singer, has not brought her what God alone can give to his elect: the accent of the heart. Sometimes, however, there escapes from the limpid voice of Mme. Sontag a reflection as it were of the German sentimentality, which colors her sweet melopeia and gives it a more penetrating flavor.

Germany, which has produced so many glorious geniuses in instrumental music and such excellent artists for all instruments, has been much less happy in the lyric drama and the art of singing. Excepting Mozart, who is a miracle of Providence; excepting some composers of the second order, such as Winter, who were inspired by Mozart and the Italian school, the German operas have been conceived after a system which does not allow the human voice to display all its magnificences. Thus the singers born beyond the Rhine, whose reputation has crossed the boundaries of their own nationality, are extremely rare. Mme. Mara (*Schmaeling*), who was born at Cassel in 1747, and who died in Livonia on the 20th of January, 1833, at the age of eighty-four years, was the only German *cantatrice*, before Mme. Sontag, who enjoyed a European fame.

* * * * *

The celebrated singers of the nineteenth century may be ranged in three very different groups. In one would be found those who have shone chiefly by the expression of energetic sentiments and by elevation of style, like Mme. Pisaroni, Mme. Pasta and Mme. Malibran. In another we should remark those marvellous sirens who have evaporated in a burst of laughter, full and radiant; such as the Marcolini, Mme. Persiani and many others. It is between these two extreme groups that we would place Mme. Mainvielle-Fodor, Mme. Damouréau and Mme. Sontag, who have had all the seductions of grace and of a rich vocalization, without possessing either the *entraînement* of passion, or the facile spontaneity of gaiety. Accordingly these have lived long, because they have never experienced those transports which wear out and consume a poor woman, as a diamond becomes volatile in the crucible of a chemist. We like to imagine Mme. Sontag, clad in a white robe, lending her ear to harmless conversation, as she peacefully traverses a shaded aisle, her bosom decorated with a bouquet of *Vergiss-mein-nicht*.

OPERA BEFORE MOZART.

[From the "LIFE AND WORKS OF MOZART," by OULIBIACHEFF.]

III.

NATIONAL STYLES—ITALIAN, GERMAN AND FRENCH OPERA CONTRASTED—GLUCK.

Every nation, every epoch has its own taste, which it necessarily imparts to the musicians, whom it produces. This taste is in its nature special, and what is special never can be wholly harmonized with the expression of things absolute, as for example the human passions considered in their principle. Hence it follows, that the imitations of dramatic music have commonly only a relative worth, only a passing and local resemblance to objects represented, that is to say, to the feelings of the persons; a resemblance, which on the one hand constantly diminishes with the change in musical taste, and which on the other does not exist at all to a strange audience. The

speciality of the taste of the times is a cause why music becomes antiquated, and the speciality of the local taste a cause, which makes it less intelligible and less attractive in localities where a different taste prevails. When one sets out to give the universal language of feeling, he gets no farther than to produce the language of his time or of his hearers. But since the musicians cannot do otherwise, we will see how they contrive, as natives, to please the public and themselves. If one wishes to convince himself, he will find four ways of nationalizing or localizing the score of an opera.

The first and obviously the simplest way, is to bring the music to the mill of the national melody; then the opera becomes entirely national. Certainly, but then two little difficulties are in the way. There are countries, which possess no proper national melody; and then I scarcely know of any national melody, which is adapted to the various expressions of dramatic music, whether serious or comic. The cases, in which popular melodies are applicable to the lyric stage, belong always among the exceptions. Such is the case when the song is given for what it really is in the opera, or when the nationality of a people or an individual forms the subject of the piece. Thus WEIGL has with singular success employed Swiss airs in his opera, *Die Schweizerfamilie* ("The Swiss Family"), the subject of which is home-sickness. But such exceptions never can become the rule.

A second means of lending a smack of nationality to theatrical music, consists in employing everywhere certain melodic turns, passages, rhythms and forms in the accompaniment, which, without being drawn exactly from a national source, have kept their hold through a silent, but not the less binding understanding between composers, singers and public. Such is the conventional form, which we remark in the old as well as in the new Italian opera.

The third means consists in systematically destroying the balance between the elements of an opera, in favor of one of them. When, for example, the declamation is sacrificed to the melody, the orchestra to the vocal parts, truth to material effect, expression to the *bravura* and the contrary, any one who knows these exclusive tendencies, who knows in what parts of the same the composers of a nation have distinguished themselves and what parts they are wont to slight, can judge of the music and say: That is French, German, Italian music.

Finally there is yet a fourth means, whose employment tends to make the national coloring most obvious. It consists in lending to the music a character corresponding to any peculiarity, or even to any particularly remarkable weakness, which distinguishes one people from another. We see for example, that what to-day makes the Germans the first musicians, the poetico-metaphysical genius of the nation, so favorable to the sublime inspirations of pure music, does not always lead them so well in the most positive application of this art, I mean the musical drama. We recognize this predominant tendency to the ultra-romantic and the hyper-original in some of their most celebrated operas; in their frequently too much enveloped songs; in intentions, which from their very fineness lose themselves in indefiniteness; in a certain mixture of repose and sentimental dreaminess, which unstrings the very

hottest passions of their nature; in a knowledge which is not always very clear, or very dramatic; but every where we meet the stamp of reflection, of true originality and individuality, which marks all the artistic productions of the land.

In France it is quite otherwise, and even the Germans write there in an altogether different style. In the French opera, as it is now constituted, there is an evident striving to appear characteristic, to heighten effect by all means known or possible. Much display, which frequently resembles the mere glitter of gold tinsel; a lavish expenditure of passages and bravura pieces, surpassing even the Italian; an activity of instruments, which goes beyond even the Germans; male parts written in a vocal register, to make a physician shudder; song-parts of an expression in the highest degree French, half chivalrie, half gascoigne; a rhythm, which moves or runs in even pace with the country itself; a charlatanism in modulations from one key to another, a multitude of dramatic and very beautiful effects, little depth, almost no originality: — that is what I have fancied I discovered in reading through the works of the most celebrated opera writers of our time.

In Italy the national physiognomy, which from of old has mirrored itself most manifestly in the Opera, lies in dilettantism, in the passion itself for music. As born musicians, connoisseurs in all that concerns execution, neither better nor worse judges of composition than the great mass of the public elsewhere, indifferent to the dramatic development, but on the other hand as distinguished *orecchianti* (possessors of a musical ear), the Italians desire nothing of an opera but euphony, with a strong dose of noise (which they loved less at one time), fluent *roulades*, a pleasant tickling of the senses, an intoxicating thrill, a voluptuous warmth. With them the music conforms to the climate. The people of the North, as we know, loved to warm themselves by their glowing sun, and if to-day they cannot leave their homes to seek it, they try to supply this want by the glow of their music.

From our remarks it follows, that of the four modes of indicating the local origin of an opera, all of which can be and are pledges of success with native audiences, there is not one, which in the judgment of a foreign and impartial connoisseur really denotes a fault, an imperfection, or indeed a negation in music. And yet most of the operas, indeed we maintain, all of them, range themselves under some one of these four categories. Moreover there is no branch of art, in which tastes and opinions are so different as in dramatic music, and there is none, which has had so much to suffer from the times. There is only one opera, which rises above all influences of time and local relations, and at an immeasurable height rules the remotest and most splendid regions of unmixed psychology. This no nation can claim as its exclusive property. The text is Italian, the subject Spanish, the composer a German; for one must choose some language wherein to write a theatrical piece, the action must occur in some place and the musician be born somewhere.

But as regards the score, the approbation of the world, which agrees in recognizing it as the first masterpiece of the lyric stage, and a half century, which seems only to have enhanced every one of its beauties, have settled it that the score is neither exclusively German, nor Italian, Spanish, Russian nor French. It is universal!

All my readers have named this opera, and while they named it, they will have understood why I touched upon a subject, which does not for a moment interrupt the thread of our historical considerations, because it is essentially connected with the goal to which I am tending. We shall now see what fate awaited the opera in France.

The difference in its fate among the Italians and the French is fully explained by the difference of the two peoples. The first were the most musical people in Europe; the second the best versed in literature of any in the seventeenth century. This fundamental distinction must have reversed the mutual relations between the three classes of producers, from whose coöperation an opera results, and have led each of the two nations to results diametrically opposite.

When the musical drama was introduced into France under Cardinal Mazarin, there was as yet no French music. What LULLI had till then composed, was in about the same genre in which PERI and CACCINI had written, to whom LULLI was superior only in his overtures and his dance airs, which for a long time passed for models in all Europe and which even Italy borrowed of him. But soon the Italians got the start of him; they began to sing, while the French went on psalmody, for which we cannot reasonably reproach them. In music they were yet a people in its childhood; they wanted historical antecedents; they possessed neither composers nor singers; and for the little knowledge that was diffused among them, they were indebted to the foreigners, whose debtors they have remained to our day for the sum total of the advances, which have made their lyric-dramatic school illustrious in noble or serious operas. It was the fortune of this school to be born in the lap of barbarism and to remain there for a long time through the want of native talents. When the Italians took that splendid upward flight, which placed them so high in melodic composition and in the art of singing, while it removed them more and more from the conditions of the drama, the French were not able to follow them. As an ingenious people however, they made a virtue of necessity and found a glory in wounding the ear from principle; out of vanity and thirst for distinctions of all kinds, they honored with the name of a national music the newly revived Florentine song-speech, which the Italians had long since given up, and which moreover was no music. But while the French naturalized among them this intolerable reciting manner, they closed a no less loyal compact with the rational principle, which had called the same into life. The idea of the founders of the lyric drama could not become lost in the land of a CORNEILLE and a RACINE, as it did in Italy. Cast upon the then so classic French ground, it lay long buried as a precious seed; at last it sprang up and the harvest turned out all the fairer for the long time they had had to wait for it.

I am firmly convinced that the hearers of the old French opera looked for nothing in it but dramatic excitements and the dance; for, we cannot too often repeat it, the Florentine psalmody, or what is scarcely better, the recitative of LULLI and RAMEAU could never have inspired much interest in any one as music. It pleased in France as a sort of strengthening of the effect. Here they were accustomed to the shockingly false screech of the singers; the ear was as yet

so uncultivated, that no one was offended by it; and hence this very scream, this *urlo Francese* (French howl) was received only as the exalted expression of the passions. That musical enjoyment, which the audiences sought not in the dramatic music, but which one cannot quite dispense with in the opera, they found in airs, which were danced to, in which there is always some rhythm and some melody, that is to say, something true and answering to the hearer's power of comprehension. Hence *Ballets* and *Divertissements* were always inseparable from musical tragedy. Even to-day they hold fast to these, while the friends of music would gladly dispense with such auxiliaries.

The principle of lyric-dramatic truth prevailed thus from the outset in the grand Opera; but foreigners never suspected it, since it was applied in almost as bad a manner as in the time of GIOVANNI BARDI. Foreigners, who understood something of music, did not comprehend this exhibition; they heard nothing but a long, monotonous Jeremiad without melody or rhythm, in which it was impossible to distinguish the recitatives from the *arioso*, and which was rendered still more intolerable by an ear-splitting execution, a Gothic droning, laughable embellishments, and bleating cadences. The natives, upon whom the thing made quite a different and a purely dramatic impression, declared with a contemptuous smile, that strangers were not up to the level of their opera.

This state of things brought about, as we have already remarked, relations and consequences wholly the reverse of those, which marked the development of the musical drama with the Italians. The poet, from whom the public expected its chief enjoyment, and who reaped glory from a well elaborated opera text as well as from a good tragedy, kept even pace with the composer, if he did not even get before him. The composer, for whom the choice of the poem or the kind of verse was the most indifferent matter in the world, since his music adapted itself equally well, that is to say equally badly, to every kind, could not seriously fall out with the author of the words. Still less so with the singers. These possessed in the highest degree what was necessary, to execute all that was not song; and since no one thought of offering them such, they took up a score with the same docility or the same indifference, with which the composer took up the poem. What cared they whether the notes were put together so or so? Their art limited itself to the taking points of the French song: to the *portamento*, the *amoroso*, the *trillo*, &c.; and these tricks were employed throughout, as well as the scream. Thus in France poets, musicians and singers lived in sweetest harmony, one in their interests, their means, their end. The order, in which we have named them, marked the degree of their respective consequence. With the Italians the relation was precisely the reverse and transformed the poet into a hod-carrier, the maestro into a slave and the singers into despots. Hence a contrasted and striking result in the history of the lyric theatre with these two nations. In Italy an opera never outlived the accidental assemblage of the singers, for whom it was written; it lasted just one *stagione* or theatrical "season." In France whole generations of singers succeeded one another in the poems of QUINAULT and the music of LULLI. It required no less a man than

GLUCK, to consign to the final repose of the grave this musical mummy, which had held possession of the throne of the Grand Opera since its foundation.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, however, a troop of comic opera singers brought into France the taste for the true music, which needs only to present itself to make proselytes at once. The men of sense, as MOZART used to express it, the real friends of music felt at once, that this was the enjoyment, which they had vainly sought in the National Opera; but such men were at that time rare in the land, and their enthusiasm, which with the French is always inseparable from the spirit of propagandism, had to encounter fearful opposition. The good patriots, who had no ears, made it a duty to drive back the invasion of the foreign music; the Grand Opera caballed; the comic opera singers were sent away. Their stay in France nevertheless bore its fruits. Young musicians of talent, PHILIDOR, MONSIGNY and GRETRY sought in their comic operas to imitate the style of the *Serua padrona*, which had so enchanted the amateurs in the Italian theatre. These happy attempts, which gradually accustomed the French ears to true music, feeble as they were, prepared the arrival of GLUCK, whom musical Tragedy awaited ere she stepped into the place of the false idol, which had represented her for more than a century and a half.

[To be continued.]

The curious lines below are from the pen of the late lamented THOMAS HOOD. Most bards find it sufficiently difficult to obtain one rhyming word at the end of a line, but Hood secures three, with an ease which is as graceful as it is surprising.

A NOCTURNAL SKETCH.

Even has come: and from the dark park, hark
The signal of the setting sun — one gun!
And six is sounding from the chime — prime time
To go and see the Drury Lane Dane slain,
Or hear Othello's jealousy doubt spout on;
Or Macbeth raving at that shade made blade,
Denying to his frantic clutch much such;
Or else to see Ducrew, with wide tide, stride
Four horses as no other man can span;
Or in the small Olympic pit, sit split,
Laughing at Liston, while you quiz his phiz.

Anon night comes, and with her wings brings things
Such as with his poetic tongue, Young sung;
The gas up blazes with its bright white light,
And paralytic watchmen prowl, howl, growl,
About the streets, and take up Pall-Mall Sal,
Who trusting to her nightly jobs, robs fobs.

Now thieves do enter for your cash, smash, crash,
Past drowsy Charley, in a deep sleep, creep,
But frightened by policeman B 3, flee,
And while they're going, whisper low, "no go!"

Now Puss, while folks are in their beds, treads leads,
And sleepers grumble, Drat that cat!

Who in the gutter oaterwauls, squalls, manls
Some feline foe, and screams in shrill ill will.

Now Bulls of Bashan, of a prize size, rise
In childish dreams, and with a roar gore poor
Georgey, or Charles, or Billy, willy nilly;
But nurse-maid, in a night-mare rest, chest-pressed,
Dreameth of one of her old flames, James Grimes,
And that she hears — what faith is man's — Ann's bans,
And his, from Reverend Mr. Rice, twice, thrice;
White ribbons flourish, and a stout shout out,
That upward goes, shows Rose knows those bows' woes.

FINE FRUIT is the flower of commodities. It is the most perfect union of the useful and the beautiful that the earth knows. Trees full of

soft foliage; blossoms fresh with spring beauty; and finally, fruit, rich, bloom-dusted, melting, luscious — such are the treasures of the orchard and the garden, temptingly offered to every landholder in this bright and sunny, though temperate climate. — A. J. Downing.

Fine Arts.

Lectures on Allston. By William Ware.

We have had the privilege of perusing the proof-sheets of this delightful volume, to be issued in a couple of weeks from the press of Messrs. Phillips and Sampson. Probably no man was worthier or more competent to describe the characteristics of Allston's genius, than the lamented author. Himself an artist by temperament and native tendency, and practically too, in the way of elegant pastime amid the severer duties of his high profession — (indeed, it is said that the vivid pictures in his romance of "Zenobia" were at first pencil sketches on the walls of his chamber), he had all that religious sense of beauty, that fervent ideality, that love of truth and scorn of cheap effect, that rich, subdued tone of life, in a word, (a word, too, of which he beautifully expounds the meaning in these lectures), that *repose*, which could appreciate the same qualities in the great painter. Mr. Ware, like the master whom he celebrates, was possessed of the most keen, passionate, delicately discriminating sense of Color, and in this he places, more than in anything else, the mastery of Allston.

This book will be found highly instructive, and every lover of Allston and of Art should have a copy. In marking passages for extract, we are perplexed by the tempting variety of things which we hate to renounce. But in our poverty of room, we take as specimens almost at random:

WHY HE PAINTED SO FEW PICTURES.

"In regard to the particular subject of any picture, he chose it, not, for any reason of momentary popularity, or, because it would sell, or exhibit well, nor at the urgency of others, nor for any idle whim or fancy; but because he himself had fallen in love with it, and he could not rest till it was done; his imagination was inflamed, and the fire spread and communicated power to his whole being. He then was in a condition to work, and he worked, as a man, then only, does. When a man paints a picture, or does any kind of work, on such principles, he works well. A book, poem, novel, history, written in such a way, stands a chance of being read longer than while the ink is drying. To draw an illustration from my own profession, sermons written in this way only, are good ones. An eminent sermonizer of our own time, I have heard say, that he would not begin to write a sermon, let what would happen, till he knew what to write about (what a censure on most of us!) nor only that, not till he had found something that he wanted to say, and believed he knew how to say. And he waited often, weeks and weeks, before he could move. But, when the work was done, it was done; the man was in the sermon; and whatever there was in him of intellectual or moral power, these passed over to the hearer and possessed him; it was so, so only, that Allston undertook his pictures. They are, in no instance, painted without the deepest meditation and the profoundest study. This is obvious to any one who knows anything about them. He has, in each case, found a thought which he wished to utter, which he was burning to utter, into which, then, by degrees and by prolonged study, he concentrated every faculty, affection, knowledge of his mind. Then he painted; and to say that he succeeded, is only to proclaim a natural, irresistible effect, of the means and methods employed."

"This, undoubtedly, was the principal reason, why, comparatively, and for a person of his power, he painted so few pictures. He could not paint many done in that way. A man so thoroughly conscientious, who made a conscience of his art, could not make many; too many conditions were to be satisfied for that. Had he been willing to paint pictures on the principles on which so many make them, men, too, who have been eminent in their profession, he might easily have rolled in wealth, instead of dying, as he did, in a more honorable poverty. But whether, in that way, his reputation would have gained, is another thing."

Mr. Allston's mind was a religious mind—another reason of his success. He looked at subjects, as he looked at nature, through a religious medium. Everything was colored by it to his eye. This was a great happiness to him, as a man, as it was a great additional source of power, as an artist. Beato Angelico was not more a religious man than he—nor Overbeck; religious in no one-sided, technical sense, but in the universal sense. He was, indeed, of a particular church; but he was, in religion, what he so emphatically declared himself in art, a wide liker; by charity in religion, and benevolence in art, he was alike distinguished."

HIS "VALENTINE" AS TO COLOR.

"For the Valentine, I may say, though to some it may seem an extravagance, I have never been able to invent the terms that would sufficiently express my admiration of that picture—I mean, of its color; though, as a whole, it is admirable for its composition, for the fewness of the objects admitted, for the simplicity and naturalness of their arrangement. But the charm is in the color of the flesh, of the head, and of the two hands. The subject is, a young woman reading a letter, holding the open letter with both the hands. The art can go no further, nor, as I believe, has it ever gone any further. Some pigments or artifices were unfortunately used, which have caused the surface to crack, and which require the picture now to be looked at, at a farther remove than the work, on its own account, needs or requires; it even demands a nearer approach, in order to be well seen, than these cracks will permit. But these accidental blemishes do not materially interfere with the appreciation and enjoyment of the picture. It has, what I conceive to be, that most rare merit—it has the same universal hue of nature and truth, in both the shadows and the lights which Nature has, but *Art* almost never, and which is the great cross to the artist. The great defect, and the great difficulty, in imitating the hues of the flesh, lies in the shadows and the half-shadows. You will often observe, in otherwise excellent works of the most admirable masters, that, the moment their pencil passes to the shadows of the flesh, especially the half-shadows, truth, though not always a certain beauty, forsakes them. The shadows are true in their degree of dark, but false in tone and hue. They are true shadows, but not true flesh. You see the form of a face, neck, arm, hand, in shadow, but not flesh in shade; and, were that portion of the form sundered from its connection with the body, it could never be told, by its color alone, what it was designed to be. Allston's wonderful merit is, (and it was Titian's) that the hue of life and flesh is the same in the shadows, as in the light. It is not only shadow or dark, but it is flesh in shadow. The shadows of most artists, even very distinguished ones, are green, or brown, or black, or lead color, and have some strong and decided tint other than that of flesh. The difficulty, with most, seems to have been so insuperable, that they cut the knot at a single blow, and surrendered the shadows of the flesh, as an impossibility, to green, or brown, or black. And, in the general imitation of the flesh tints, the greatest artists have apparently abandoned the task in despair, and contented themselves with a correct utterance of form and expression, with well harmonized darks and lights, with little attention to the hues of nature. Such was Caravaggio always, and Guercino often, and all their respective followers. Such was Michael Angelo, and often Raffaelle,

though, at other times, the color of Raffaelle is not inferior, in truth and glory, to Titian, greatest of the Venetian colorists; as in his portraits of Leo X., Julius, and some parts of some of his frescoes. But, for the most part, though he had the genius for everything, for color as well as form, yet one may conjecture he found color, in its greatest excellence, too laborious for the careful elaboration, which can alone produce great results, too costly of time and toil, the sacrifice too great, of the greater to the less. Allston was apparently, never weary of the labor which would add one more tint of truth to the color of a head or hand, or even, of any object of still life, that entered into any of his compositions. Any eye that looks, can see that it was a most laborious and difficult process by which he secured his results; by no superficial wash of glaring pigments, as in the color of Rubens—whose carnations look as if he had finished the forms at once, the lights and the darks, in solid, opaque colors, and then, with a free and broad brush or sponge, washed in the carmine, lake, and vermilion, to confer the requisite amount of red; but, on the contrary, wrought out, in solid color, from beginning to end, by a painful and sagacious formation on the palette, of the very tint by which the effect, the lights, shadows and half-shadows, and the thousand, almost imperceptible, gradations of hue, which bind together the principal masses of light and shade, was to be produced."

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AMERICAN SCULPTURE. A writer in the *Transcript* (July 29th) gives an interesting account of the late works of our countryman, CRAWFORD, from which we copy the latter half, the first relating wholly to his great work for the State of Virginia, to which we have before alluded.

"Mr. Crawford's Hebe and Ganymede, a beautiful work, executed for Mr. Charles C. Perkins, of this city, is now finished—and a flying figure of Ceres, with a bounteously filled lap, will soon be ready to receive the final touches of the master hand. It is sufficient to say, that in conception and execution they are worthy of the genius which produced the *Orpheus*—and a glorious fulfilment of the youthful promise of one whom the great Thorwaldsen esteemed his successor in the highest classical style of sculpture.

"But Crawford's love for the antique and his success in mythological subjects, have not cramped his genius, so that he can produce nothing but goddesses and satyrs. He has just finished a figure of a Boy playing marbles, which is so entirely natural and boyish, that you can almost hear the marbles rattle in his pocket, and the chuckle that follows the well-directed snap. The stooping posture, the right hand holding the marble, the intentness of the countenance, and the anatomical effect of the whole are most wonderful.

"But the work which is destined to add most to his reputation—the work which will entitle him to the love of every man, woman and child who speaks the English tongue, is his *Children in the Wood*. He has recently modelled this, and is now executing it in marble for Mr. James Lenox, of New York. The artist has chosen the moment in the sad history when 'deathe did end their grief': they are clasped in each other's arms, and the robin-redbreasts are just commencing their pious labor. They are clad in the graceful English costume of the middle ages. The whole story of their sufferings is expressed in their sorrowful but lovely features—and the little boy clasps his sister's hand as if he wished to keep her in the world which he himself is just leaving. The familiarity of the subject and the natural manner of treating it will make it one of the most popular pieces of sculpture of the present age. They who have known Crawford only in mythological subjects, can have no idea of the artistic grace with which he clothes subjects of the later ages; they are only acquainted with one phase of his genius."

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A. J. DOWNING. Among the victims by the destruction of the Henry Clay there is none whom the country could so ill afford to lose or whose services to the community can so little be replaced as Mr. DOWNING of Newburg. A man of genius and of high culture, thoroughly disciplined in his profession by long study and observation in Europe; with taste refined and judgment true enough to feel the deficiencies and to know the needs of our domestic, and especially of our rural, architecture; still in the prime of life and exercising a wide influence by his practical labors as well as by his writings; he is snatched from a sphere of high and beautiful utility, and a successor we cannot hope to find. What Mr. Downing had done and was doing to improve the fashion of our dwellings hardly surpassed in value his contributions, theoretical and practical, to the kindred art of landscape gardening. Under his directing hand the grounds of the Capitol and the Smithsonian Institute at Washington were being transformed into models of beauty in their kind; and the grounds about many private mansions also bear testimony to the same taste, the same wise sense of beauty and fitness. As a writer Mr. Downing was remarkable for a mixture of strong sense, thorough understanding of his subject and genial originality. The cessation of his monthly essays in *The Horticulturist* will leave a permanent blank in the literature of the Domestic Arts. While he drew his materials from the most varied culture he was always, and in the most frank and manly way, an American. His chief aim was to refine the taste, and elevate the social life and habits of his countrymen to something like the ideal proper to freemen. An artist, a scholar and a gentleman, we deplore his untimely loss; and a wide circle of acquaintances, who with us recall his eminent social as well as public qualities, will join with us in this tribute to his memory.—*N. Y. Tribune*.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUGUST 8, 1852.

To whom it may concern.

One of the conditions of subscription to this Journal is *payment in advance*. Yet, knowing well the character of most of our subscribers, and that a hint at any time would be sufficient, we have not been strenuous in enforcing the rule. By far the greater number have of their own accord sought us out and paid. But there still remains upon our books quite a number of names of out-of-town or distant subscribers, who have neglected to send the wherewithal. All such are respectfully requested to remit at once by mail, and receipts shall be enclosed to them in their next paper.

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A WORD TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS. We have now passed the middle of the first volume of our new Journal of Music. So far we have gone quietly rejoicing on our way, saying not a word about ourselves, our prospects, our success; making no boasts and no appeals for patronage, beyond the unobtrusive appeal contained in the tone and character of the paper itself. We have resorted to no clap-trap to win over the multitude; we have run the risk of addressing sometimes only the intelligent few, rather than cater to ignorant and superficial tastes for the sake of the wider harvest; because we knew that the approbation of the qualified judges, however few, is in the end success. We have not copied the good things which the press has said of us, nor have we in a single case solicited a notice. We have done nothing to conciliate the leaders of powerful parties in the musical world, whose recommendation tells upon armies of followers, pupils, business dependents, &c. We have even employed no outside machinery to "push our circulation," as

the phrase is. We have been our own editor, our own man of business, our own office clerk; which multifariousness of cares has of course made the contents of our columns fall short somewhat of our ideal. But in no other way could we afford to start at all, and in no other way could we trust the bantling to grow up at all true to our aspiration: once full-grown he will be able to dictate terms in entering into any business partnership, that may extend his sphere.

With all these drawbacks, our success (thanks in great part to the friends who have with so much heart and talent and efficiency continued to enrich our columns) has been all, and more than all, that we anticipated. In four months, during which the paper has been simply working its own way quietly along, we have gained very nearly a thousand subscribers. We have now reached the point at which, if each of our subscribers, who we know to be interested in our success, would simply exert himself or herself to send us one new name, our enterprise would be fully and permanently established.

The simple hint is all. Our readers may safely trust our own taste and temperament and most ingrained, inveterate habit, that we shall not often bore them (as we indeed have *never* done before), with talk *about* our paper, to the abridgement of the real matter of the paper itself.

We will only here add, that our present model is intended to serve only until it shall have paid for itself. After that, we mean to improve it and enlarge it from time to time, in every practicable way.

Mozart's Symphony in E b.

The two first movements of this beautiful work were given at the last Afternoon Concert. It had been once before played in Boston (the entire symphony) at the Concerts of the Germania Musical Society last winter. It is one of the four great symphonies composed by Mozart, about the time of his *Don Giovanni*, in 1786-8. The others are the one in D, the one in G minor (played a year ago by our Musical Fund orchestra), and the glorious "Jupiter" in C. Why this one bears among the musicians the name of the "Swan" Symphony, as it was set down in the bill, we are at a loss to imagine; since it was by no means the last work or "Swan-song" of the composer. It was composed in 1788, in the same year with, but before the "G minor" and the "Jupiter," before his three operas, *Cosi fan tutti*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *La Clemenza di Tito*, and of course before the *Requiem*, which naturally should be Mozart's swan-song.

Howbeit, the name is of no consequence; it is a most beautiful symphony, although not standing in the same exalted category with the two later ones above-named; and we thank the little orchestra for its exertions to make us acquainted with half of it, since "half a loaf is better than no bread." We are sure it was enjoyed enough to warrant the performance of the whole hereafter. Especially the Andante, which, starting with a very simple and apparently unpromising theme, and borrowing but few incidental thoughts upon its way, develops gradually into a depth and fullness of expression, now touching the saddest depths of human experience, and finally returning to the first theme and key with a sweet serenity of spirit, which makes one feel that Music, in its

highest forms of art, as in its merest melodies, is but an infinitely varied, ever fresh discourse upon the one text of the human heart and human destiny.

"Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought."

The orchestra, (in their vacation we may say it,) have appeared to enter upon the ground of Symphony a little timidly. We beg them to take courage and proceed. They certainly will find that in the long run audiences can be held in Boston, only by the assurance of hearing music of the higher order. Waltzes and Marches, Variations and "Arrangements" from operas are very well by way of alternation; but we New Englanders are a people, who go also to learn, where we go to be amused, and we can hardly pardon ourselves the indulgence of the musical sense, unless we can make the concert in some sense an equivalent for the Lyceum or the good book. We know there is some pedantry about this with not a few: but Heaven send us more of it, we say, if it will only lead our people to open their ears and their souls to those nobler works of music, which are sure in the end to make the deepest lovers.

German "Saengerbund" in Boston.

Until the great congress of the German singing-societies in New York, we were not aware, and probably most of our readers were not, of the existence of one of these musical unions in this city. A few evenings since, by the polite invitation of their leader and teacher, Mr. KREISSMANN, we had the pleasure of attending one of their meetings. Twice a week they assemble, to the number of about twenty-five, all plain, hard-working mechanics, not a professional musician among them, to seek a social, genial and inspiring alternation from the day's toils, by singing together some of the noble four-part *Lieder* written expressly for male voices by some of the greatest German composers. For the "Liedertafeln," "Liederkreise," &c., have become so important a feature in German social life, as to demand supplies of this sort from the fountains of the very best. Mendelssohn, Schubert, Reichardt, Schumann — all the inspired ones, have written music for this use.

The Boston society is in its infancy, and has much to learn by practice; but it has good materials, good spirit (the real German spirit for music), a good teacher, and thus armed with good *Kern-Deutschheit*, it is bound to realize good music. They take it very socially; seated at tables in a half-circle round a large room, (nor do they sing a whit the worse, we fancy, for the national feature of the foaming cans of *Bayerische Bier*), the teacher at the piano in the centre, and the note books in hand, they study patiently into a piece till they have learned the "hang of it," the lights and shades, &c., and then standing up rehearse it in a freer style. Their drill is thorough and their progress corresponding. We listened to some pieces of a most impressive character, rendered more so by the careful regard to *pianissimo* and accent. Among others was the exquisite night piece to Goethe's words: *Unter allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*, which produced such an impression in New York, as given by the combined chorus. Two or three noble pieces of Mendelssohn, too, were finely rendered.

We know not but we are betraying confidence by so free a notice. But we do it to call attention to and to commend a social practice in itself so excellent. These leagues of harmony are also leagues of friendship, patriotism and the great humanitarian sentiment. Why are they not practicable among Americans? and why should we not ere long have *our* great annual festivals and congresses of Glee Clubs (to take the English name that comes the nearest to it)?

We are pleased to learn that it is proposed to introduce occasionally a strain from the *Saengerbund* into the next series of Afternoon Concerts of the "Germania Serenade Band"; it would make an interesting feature. There is a freshness and genuineness about this German part-singing which seldom becomes hackneyed like our Yankee Psalm and Glee singing.

MADAME SONTAG. The approaching visit of this great artist, long since acknowledged the greatest singer whom Northern Europe has produced, until the LIND's appearance, naturally excites a desire to know something of her career and her artistic quality in the estimation of the best judges in the old world. We have read many elaborate notices of her in German, French and English papers, but have found nothing so clear, so pleasantly written, and apparently so well-weighed as the article which we translate on the first page from a French volume, published a year since, entitled *Critique et Littérature Musicales*, par P. SCUDO.

This book contains a series of essays on musical topics, shedding light over nearly the whole history of music. They originally appeared as occasional contributions to some of the Parisian journals, for which M. Scudo wrote as musical critic. They evince a large and catholic taste in music, partial to the real classic masters and faithfully cautioning his readers against the brilliant materialism of the modern schools. Well might he be above all narrow nationality of taste; for according to his own account in his Preface, he was born in Venice, where he breathed the spirit of the old Italian masters; was educated in Germany by masters formed after the ways of Bach and Handel, Mozart and Beethoven; and has since lived in Paris, in the daily hearing of the Conservatoire and the Grand Opera, and familiar with the latest wonders of Listz and Berlioz. Thus the music of passion, the music of deep thought and spirituality, and the music of effect, have all had their share in his culture as a widely appreciative critic. We are sure his piece on Mme. Sontag will be read with interest.

MME. ALBONI. The famous contralto is yet properly to commence her public career in America; since the two concerts given in New York, previous to her summer rambles to Niagara and Newport, were evidently unseasonable, and merely served to give a taste of her quality by taking off the edge of the eager Gotham curiosity. She is to commence in earnest, according to all accounts, a little before Sontag, and then we shall have two of the greatest vocal celebrities of Europe in the field, to comfort us for the loss of the one greater, who has left us.

Alboni is a contralto; (that is, chiefly famed in contralto parts, though in compass her voice is fairly a mezzo soprano;) and there is an idle prejudice abroad in the community, that a con-

tralto is in the nature of the case only something *second rate*. Who is going to be much excited about a lady who only "sings *second*"? is the question that readily rises to some minds. But this is a great mistake; there is no more interesting quality of voice than the contralto; it is as capable as any other of the most passionate expression in music, and was employed by Rossini for the principal character in several of his operas.

We propose giving to our readers, from the same author who has sketched us Sontag, a brief history of the principal *contralti*, ending with Alboni.

DR. MOSCHZISKER, whose card appears on the next page, has been for sometime favorably known to us as a gentleman of literary accomplishments, and a writer in the English as well as in his native German language. He was for a year or two a frequent contributor to reviews in London, and since then has been similarly engaged in New York and Philadelphia. He now concludes to make literature secondary, and returns to the profession for which he formerly studied, of an Oculist. Dr. M. is the son of a distinguished Oculist in Prussia, and brings high testimonials of his own title to advise and treat in diseases to which literary men are so often subject. He also attends to diseases of the ear.

Musical Intelligence.

Local.

THE MUSICAL CONVENTION, under the direction of Messrs. BAKER, JOHNSON, SOUTHARD, &c., commences (as will be seen by the advertisement) on Tuesday next, at 10 A. M. at the Melodeon. It will continue ten days, and it is expected that there will be a large gathering of teachers, choristers, members of former classes, and friends of music generally.

Two hours each day will be devoted to lessons in musical Notation, chiefly for the benefit of teachers; one hour to lessons in Harmony; one to the Cultivation of the Voice; and the remainder of the time will be spent in the practice of Hymn-tunes, Choruses, Glees, &c., by the best masters.

New York.

THE FRENCH OPERA TROUPE are performing at Castle Garden. Auber's *Diamants de la Couronne* has drawn more by the charm of the music, than of the orchestra and singers, if we may trust the *Tribune*, which "cannot shut its eyes to the fact, that the large majority of M. Fiot's troupe are mere *doublures*." M. Grat is "husky"; M. Montalar's voice has none of the "richness or volume implied in the word *bass*"; Mme. Pillot is "neat and lively, with a good deal of *jeu*, smirking, smiling and ogling, according to the most approved laws of Vaudeville," but has "very, very little voice;" the tenor, Dubriny, is favorably noticed; as also M. Duguet, a light baritone, of flexibility and sweetness, and accustomed to take leading comic parts. But it is said to be worth a visit to Castle Garden to hear Mme FLEURY-JOLLY alone;

To her rightly belongs the glory of having satisfied the audience with the *Diamants*. She is a tried performer, having taken the leading parts at the Salle Favart some eight or nine years ago. Since then we understand that New Orleans has been the scene of her triumphs. A light soprano, of large compass, though unsafe in the higher notes, sometimes deliciously soft and tender, and occasionally almost shrill, Mme. Fleury's organ is well suited to the rôles of *amoureuses* in the lively creations of Auber, Adam and Boieldieu. She has not the tone of Mme. Thillon, and is inferior to that lady as an actress; but in such a part as *Catarina*, that spectator would be fastidious who would indulge in frequent criticism."

The *Tribune* justly adds:

"The substitution of the French repertoire of comic opera, in its original shape, for the miserable travesties which are imported from London, will be a matter of congratulation to every lover of the science, and to all who can enjoy lively, exhilarating music."

MME. DURAND. Western papers, taking their pitch from Prentice of Louisville, are hymning the praises of this lady, who is giving concerts together with Sig. Novelli. Says Prentice:

"Her appearance as she came upon the stage prepared the beholders to expect the voice of an angel, and they were not disappointed. Nothing could surpass the exquisite sweetness of her tones. Her every song was encored most rapturously. No other vocalist since Jenny Lind has been greeted with so much enthusiasm."

Says the Detroit *Tribune* of her concerts in that place (by the way we are glad to see nothing said this time of "gift concerts"):

"She has a voice that is sweetness and melody itself, and a face and expression as sweet as her voice. . . . Her soul seems to be breathed out in every note. There is no distortion of countenance. . . . But the melody flows from her mouth as though her head and heart were an inexhaustible fountain of sweet sounds and deep feeling. Every thing is natural, easy, graceful."

MRS. BOSTWICK, also, was announced for a concert in Detroit.

CONCERT SWINDLE. A so-called "donation concert" came off recently at Louisville.

"By flaming handbills and other means about eight hundred persons assembled at the Mozart Hall, each expecting to draw a splendid prize. The prizes were distributed at the close of the performance in small boxes, by a special committee, but when the boxes were opened, instead of watches, jewels, pencils, etc., etc., nothing was found but candy, sugar plums, and soap."

Shade of Mozart! The statue of thy Commendatore should have stalked into that hall, with ponderous *ta ta ta*, and made a grand finale of the business, *a la* Don Giovanni.

MADAME THILLON has given a concert in Milwaukee. The *Daily Wisconsin* has a clever description thereof:

"As a singer, Mme. THILLON is above mediocrity, but far below the stars at present adorning the musical firmament. She is utterly devoid of style, and all expression is absorbed in the evident consciousness that her person, not her song, is the attraction. The ballad of 'Jeanette and Jeanneau,' which she sang on the encore of 'Lilly Bell,' was given with a good deal of archness and still more mannerism. Her movements of body are not ungraceful, (those of plump women seldom are,) but her arms were used in an awkward manner, the elbows being moved in the effort of singing, very like the wings of a cock when preparing to crow. The dress of Mme. Thillon in the first part of the concert was in good taste—that is to the credit of her mantua-maker; her ornaments, flowers, head-dress, &c., were garish and profuse—the credit of those is her own. As to personal appearance she is what the English would call a charming woman. She fills the idea of a Hebe rather than of a Venus or one of the Graces—plump, fair, vivacious, and—to a man—irresistible. In stature she is below the medium height, in figure a trifle more than plump—her head is attractive, her hair dark, glossy and luxuriant, her forehead high and broad, her eyebrows beautifully marked, her eyes large, lustrous and languishing, her nose a trifle too thick and too long, her mouth large with fine teeth, her chin *almost* double, and a neck which places the head faultlessly upon the shoulders. Mme. Thillon is very charming, but in form and feature is by no means the incarnation of one's ideal of womanly beauty."

The second part of the entertainment, 'The World's Fair,' had for its ultimate object the display of Mme. Thillon's charms in different costumes. The piece is well designed and abounds in 'Irish wit.' It is as full of puns as a pudding-stone is of plums. Mr. Hudson appeared to advantage. As a musical entertainment the whole affair savored strongly of *humbug*; as a sort of musical pantomime got up as a pretext for the display of a pretty woman, it was a very creditable affair.

"We should not forget to state that Mons. Thillon played one of De Berriot's 'variations' on the violin with unusual taste and skill. The audience seemed delighted with the performance, although by shrugs of the shoulders and shakes of the head, Monsieur seemed to deprecate their applause and to intimate that the thing was done by no means to his own satisfaction."

London.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA. The production of Spohr's *Faust* has been the great event of the season. Dr. Spohr himself presided in the orchestra, and the piece, having enjoyed an extra number of rehearsals, was most admirably performed in the presence of all the musicians and amateurs of distinction, foreign and native, then in the metropolis. *Faust* was composed and produced at Vienna, forty years ago, when Spohr was a young man. The *libretto*, a wretched affair, has nothing to do with Goethe's poem, except a few allusions; it does not even give itself of the pathos and eminently musical character of Margaret. The story is treated more after the manner of the old dramatic versions, like Kit Marlowe's. We take the following abstract from the *Times*:

"In the *Faust* of the opera, we are presented simply

with a man who, while not destitute of good impulses, is so completely the slave of his passions that he becomes a lady named Cunigunda from the hands of one Gulf, an unprincipled baron, who has confined her in a fortress to force her to his own ends. In the meantime, however, Faust has imbibed an attachment for Rosa, a maiden in humbler life, who for the time absorbs his whole attention. Rosa and Cunigunda are the stars that rule the fortunes of Faust, and are used by Mephistopheles as the means of bringing him to his ruin. Having won the affections of Rosa, he obtains an interview with her, in the midst of which he is interrupted by Mephistopheles, who apprises him that he is accused by Franz, a lover of Rosa, of having caused the death of her mother by magic, and must make his escape forthwith. Soon after, Franz and his followers come to substantiate the words of Mephistopheles, and Faust, who, under a compact with his fiendish confidant, has been endowed with miraculous powers, effects his liberation by flying through the air. We next find Faust beneath the walls of the castle of Gulf, from whose power, by the same superhuman means, he rescues Cunigunda. The baron setting him at defiance, Faust causes his castle to be destroyed by flames, and its owner to be carried away by demons. Cunigunda being restored to the arms of her lover, Count Hugo, Faust immediately conceives a passion for her. He attends the rendezvous of the witches at the summit of the Blocksberg, in company with Mephistopheles, and obtains from Sironix a potion which renders the drinker irresistible in the eyes of women. Furnished with this, he appears at the nuptial feast of Hugo and Cunigunda, where he makes love to the bride. Meanwhile, Mephistopheles warns Hugo of his danger, and the latter attacks Faust, who kills him and escapes. Rosa, who has seen Faust at the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, at the marriage of Hugo and Cunigunda, has followed him in male attire, and witnesses this catastrophe. In the last scene, for reasons only known to the librettist, Cunigunda and Rosa meet together in Faust's house at Strasburg. Faust's treachery is then discovered through the instrumentalities of Mephistopheles. Rosa escapes and drowns herself, while Cunigunda, learning that Faust was the murderer of her husband, after vainly attempting to stab him with a dagger, quits him in despair. Faust is then left alone with Mephistopheles, who informs him that the compact is at an end, and summons demons to appear and seize their prey. The piece is altogether a jumble. The incidents are forced and artificial. Faust has no distinctive character; the two women are pure abstractions; and Mephistopheles, in spite of his soliloquies, is utterly incomprehensible. Out of such a legend, nevertheless, something better might easily have been made. Spohr's music would, however, have immortalized a worse *libretto*."

Here was a thoroughly German work, sung upon the Italian stage, in the Italian language, by Italian singers, and, to suit it to the circumstances, with accompanied recitative purposely added by the composer, in place of the dialogue in the original.

"Yet," says the *Daily News*, "with all these disadvantages and difficulties, Spohr has produced a work—not so attractive, we think, as his charming 'Jessonda,' but possessed of much grandeur and beauty. Written in his youth, it belongs to the school of Mozart, of whom it shows traces (but by no means plagiarisms) in every scene—in construction, melodic phraseology, and instrumentation; the principal differences consisting in the greater use of the chromatic scale, more studied variety of modulation, and greater fulness and elaboration in the orchestral accompaniments. Fine as the music is, this elaborate style gives it an effect of heaviness arising from want of relief; and this effect is aggravated by the excessive length of the opera—excessive, we mean, relatively to the amount of its substantial matter; for, though it is not so long as the 'Huguenots' or the 'Prophète,' it has not the power possessed by those pieces, of keeping alive the attention and interest of the audience."

"The performance was admirable in every respect. The character of *Faust* has few dramatic capabilities; he is an insipid personage, and little removed from a walking gentleman. But there is fine music in the part, and Ronconi sang it beautifully. The air in the first act, 'E l'amore un grato fiore,' was a masterpiece of vocal expression. The delicious little duet between *Faust* and *Rosina*, 'Ah, se il ciel,' was sweetly sung by Ronconi and Mlle. Zerr, who sustained the part of *Rosina* very agreeably. Madame Castellan acquitted herself splendidly in the character of *Cunegonda*. Her great scene in the first act, containing the air, 'Ah, un amore fido e vero,' which in beauty and expression has scarcely been surpassed by Mozart himself, was most exquisitely given, and applauded with enthusiasm. *Hugo*, like *Faust*, is little better than a walking gentleman; but the music of the part displayed all the richness and brilliancy of Tammerlik's voice, and his success consequently was immense. The only decidedly dramatic character in the opera is *Mephistopheles*; and it certainly is Formes's masterpiece. Attired after Retzsch's drawing, he was fiendlike in every tone, look, and motion; and the monologue which opens the third act was given by him with terrible grandeur."

"The choral and concerted music was admirably performed; especially the magnificent finale to the first act, a most powerful piece of musical painting. The music

